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Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General submits the present report in response to General Assembly resolution 62/151, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant agencies of the United Nations system on the issue of globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights and to submit a substantive report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. The report summarizes views received from the Governments of Algeria, Belarus, Mauritius, the Russian Federation, Spain and Venezuela and from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The report also includes contributions by Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland and Oman submitted in response to a similar request (pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/156), which, due to their late submission, were not included in the report of the Secretary-General in 2007 (A/62/222).

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 62/151, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/62/222) and requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant agencies of the United Nations system and to submit a substantive report on this subject to the Assembly at its sixty-third session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 7 April 2008, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) sent a request for views on this issue. As of 1 August 2008, OHCHR had received responses from the Governments of Algeria, Belarus, Mauritius, the Russian Federation, Spain and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The report also includes contributions by the Governments of Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland and Oman, submitted in response to a similar request of 17 April 2007, which, due to their late submission, were not included in the report of the Secretary-General of 2007 (A/62/222).

II. Replies received from Governments

Algeria

[Original: French]
[9 July 2008]

1. The Government of Algeria stated that globalization had mainly benefited a limited number of developed countries. Algeria, like other developing countries, had felt the impact of globalization, especially in the context of reforms such as price liberalization, abandonment of price supports and the opening up of the economy, which had undermined progress in the area of social welfare.

2. In that connection, Algeria highlighted that, in compliance with the obligation assumed at the World Summit for Social Development, it had incorporated a social dimension in its macroeconomic policy. The Government further provided details of economic, social, legislative and judicial measures aimed at alleviating the impact of the diverse consequences of globalization.

3. Furthermore, Algeria referred to its national social solidarity policy, which was both a preventive and curative policy based on aid and assistance measures with the goal of safeguarding population groups affected by certain problems arising from the social and economic environment, and ensuring that they did not fall victim to long-term exclusion and marginalization.

4. Algeria also described the State's social assistance which was based on the following two schemes: the lump-sum solidarity benefit and the general-interest activity allowance. Those schemes were said to be designed to prevent all forms of marginalization and social exclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable population groups (including people with disabilities and children in institutional care) through the organization of socio-occupational integration activities, the transfer of income in the form of benefits or allowances, and other benefits, such as free access to road and rail transport.

5. In addition, Algeria provided information on its network of 258 specialized public and private establishments throughout the national territory that provided accommodation, food, medical and educational psychology services, schooling, training and socio-occupational integration services for persons with sensory disabilities (blind and deaf), motor and mental disabilities, and respiratory impairments, young people at moral risk, abandoned children, older persons and persons with incapacitating diseases.

6. Algeria noted that new support programmes had been developed for people living in precarious conditions, victims of national tragedy and disasters. Those programmes were implemented by SAMU Social Algérie, which provided medical, psychological and follow-up care for homeless people in emergency and post-emergency situations, children at moral risk, street children, women in difficulty, etc. Algeria further highlighted the following measures of solidarity that have been taken on behalf of insecure or vulnerable individuals and families:

(a) "Ramadhan" solidarity schemes. Meals are served in restaurants and baskets of groceries have been distributed to needy families throughout the national territory;

(b) Educational solidarity schemes. Educational allowances are granted to schoolchildren with disabilities, in troubled social circumstances or from needy families;

(c) Schemes for the distribution of school kits to schoolchildren from needy families;

(d) School transport schemes, principally for children living in remote areas;

(e) Schemes to provide schools with canteens;

(f) Schemes to provide schools with humidifiers and central heating;

(g) Organization of holiday camps in specialized establishments for children from the Saharan region (the Grand Sud) and children from the governorates affected by natural disasters (earthquakes);

(h) Solidarity with the students from the Grand Sud through the purchase of transport tickets;

(i) Organization of therapeutic groups for children affected by psychotraumatic experiences;

(j) Purchase of drugs for people suffering from chronic diseases;

(k) Coverage of health expenses incurred by needy persons without social insurance;

(l) Support and assistance measures on behalf of socio-humanitarian associations, involving financial and technical assistance and support for the implementation of social and humanitarian projects.

7. Moreover, Algeria described its action plan to fight against poverty (2001-2005) which provided for the implementation of five pilot projects for community development and social support and could be divided into three broad categories:

(a) Direct support for local authorities so that they can respond to urgent needs of populations in difficulty;

(b) Funding of integrated local development projects designed to launch and/or boost sustainable development initiatives in areas contending with precarious conditions;

(c) Development of outreach action to ensure more effective targeting of needs in the most vulnerable areas.

8. The Government of Algeria also referred to its programme for the implementation of community development projects — mainly hydraulics, electrification, health, public works and socio-educational facilities — which was based on targeting disadvantaged areas and the neediest segments of the population; identification of projects with the assistance of the population and their representatives; encouragement of beneficiaries to make a 10 per cent financial contribution to the cost of the project as evidence of their interest; and execution of small-scale projects to meet basic community concerns.

9. Algeria also noted its employment promotion programmes, in the form of microcredit financing, intended for persons with no income or with a low, unstable or irregular income, with the aim of promoting social development through economic activity and fighting unemployment and poverty by offering assistance (small-scale loans).

Azerbaijan

[Original: Russian]
[8 August 2007]

1. The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan stated that the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms was key to the existence of a democratic and rule-of-law State. It also noted that on the basis of market relations, the Government is creating conditions for economic development, guaranteeing freedom of enterprise and looking to improve the well-being of the nation and all its citizens, ensure their social welfare and afford them a decent standard of living. Azerbaijan stated that they are promoting the development of culture, education, health care, science and art and protecting the country's flora and fauna, and its historical, physical and spiritual heritage.

2. Azerbaijan also highlighted the constitutional rights concerning non-discrimination, economic development, employment, social security, culture, health protection and medical care and education.

3. Moreover, Azerbaijan provided information on a series of legislative Acts that address a wide range of issues. For example, the Act on Indexation of Citizens' Cash Income and Savings establishes the organizational and legal foundations for indexation of Azerbaijanis' cash income and savings to reflect rises in prices for consumer goods and charges for paid services. The Business Activity Act sets forth the principles for business activity in Azerbaijan and establishes the rights and obligations of economic actors, the forms and modalities of State protection and promotion of business, and the relationship between entrepreneurs and government bodies. Azerbaijan also referred to the Azerbaijani National Security Act, the Culture Act and the Environmental Safety Act.

4. The Government of Azerbaijan highlighted its policies to ensure effective and freely chosen employment for its citizens, and stated that the main aims of its government employment policy are:

(a) To ensure equal opportunities for all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, language, sex, family status, social origin, place of residence, property status, beliefs, or membership of political parties, trade unions or other civic organizations, with a view to realizing the right to work and free choice of employment;

(b) To support citizens' lawful labour and entrepreneurial initiatives and to provide them with assistance, with a view to developing business activity;

(c) To create conditions in which citizens can freely express their will when choosing a career and type of employment;

(d) To ensure social welfare for the unemployed and to take special measures to promote employment for citizens experiencing difficulties in finding work;

(e) To coordinate efforts on employment with economic and social policy;

(f) To provide tax and other incentives for employers who create jobs, particularly, for citizens in need of social protection and those experiencing difficulties in finding work;

(g) To coordinate efforts by government bodies, trade unions and employer associations to develop and apply measures aimed at guaranteeing employment, and to monitor their implementation;

(h) To create conditions in which Azerbaijani citizens can work abroad and stateless and foreign nationals can work in Azerbaijan;

(i) To ensure compliance with international labour standards.

5. Azerbaijan further described its Minimum Subsistence Act, which establishes the principles and rules for fixing the minimum subsistence level, as well as for its guarantee by the Government and its increase in line with the country's social and economic development.

6. Azerbaijan also provided information on its Targeted State Social Assistance Act which governs the purposes of and principles for providing such assistance, the legal framework for setting social assistance rates and other necessary arrangements in that area. Article 3 of the Act accords the right to social assistance of low-income families whose average monthly income, for reasons beyond their control, is lower than the aggregate of the qualifying thresholds for each family member. Azerbaijan stated that a law had entered into force on 1 January 2007 setting the country's 2007 subsistence minimum at an average of 64 Azerbaijani manats per capita: 70 manats for the working-age population, 49.7 manats for pensioners and 52.4 manats for children.

7. Furthermore, Azerbaijan noted the adoption of development programmes in various sectors to address the problem of poverty. The Azerbaijan Food Security Programme was said to aim at extending the scope of the country's economic reforms, increasing agricultural production and improving the food supply. The State Poverty Reduction and Economic Development Programme, is aimed at strengthening social welfare, ensuring the application of the necessary measures to

reduce the level of poverty in the country and, in so doing, fulfilling the commitments made at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000.

8. Azerbaijan further highlighted other programmes, such as the Government Regional Social and Economic Development Programme, aimed at increasing agricultural production, ensuring the development of production sectors, including the manufacturing industry, the service sector, other infrastructure sectors and tourism, raising the level of employment, and improving living standards.

9. Azerbaijan also stressed the importance of its programme to improve living conditions and increase employment among refugees and displaced persons; the General Education Schools information and communication technology Programme; the State Demographic and Population Development Programme to ensure the development of demographic processes in line with the country's social and economic strategy; the State Migration Programme, and the Preschool Education Renewal programme to establish a system of preschool education in Azerbaijan that meets today's needs and international standards.

Belarus

[Original: Russian]
[16 June 2008]

1. The Government of Belarus noted that globalization led to the increased effectiveness of the use of existing natural, material and human resources to ensure world economic growth, to improve people's well-being and, in the end, to strengthen the prerequisites for the full enjoyment of human rights.

2. Belarus stated that, at the same time, a negative aspect and consequence of globalization was the increasing disparity in countries' economic growth rates and, as a result, in the standard of living of their populations. Belarus stated that small, vulnerable developing countries that lacked comparative advantages over other countries, as well as assistance from the international community, were not in a position to reap the benefits of globalization and thereby ensure the full enjoyment of human rights. Belarus stressed that this should be taken into account by United Nations organizations and agencies that provide assistance programmes to developing countries.

3. Furthermore, Belarus noted that there were many examples that demonstrated that, in isolated instances, globalization contributed to the exacerbation of phenomena and processes that had a negative impact on the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular, Belarus highlighted the intensification of migration flows and stated that, in spite of the benefits of migration, which contributed to the growth of investments in the form of monetary remittances to developing countries, the intensification of migration flows was linked to an increase in transborder crime, terrorism, the spread of narcotics and trafficking in persons, which directly hindered the enjoyment of human rights throughout the world.

4. Belarus also submitted that, sometimes, the most economically developed and powerful countries, making use of their dominant position in the international trade and financial systems as a result of globalization, took advantage of their unique opportunities, not to support the world's less developed and vulnerable countries,

but to create artificial barriers to the exercising by those countries of their right to development. According to Belarus, this was done in order to exert economic and political pressure on sovereign, independent States with a view to achieving the narrow political interests of today's dominant countries.

5. In that connection, Belarus noted that it was therefore important to develop, at the international level, a mechanism that was capable, not of hindering globalization, but of adjusting and guiding that process, taking account of the real capabilities, needs and requirements of all the countries of the world, including the least developed countries and the countries most vulnerable to the consequences of globalization. Belarus stated that the United Nations and its specialized agencies and institutions should play a central role in developing and implementing such a mechanism.

6. Finally, Belarus noted that the United Nations should also become a forum that had real authority to prevent the establishment of the diktat of the most economically powerful countries and their exertion of pressure on sovereign, independent States for political reasons by using the additional economic leverage that they had acquired as a result of globalization.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[8 August 2007]

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted that the process of globalization of society (from economic-social, legal-political and cultural aspects alike), should follow basic postulates of international law, that is, the principle of equality before the law (through multilateral and bilateral agreements), strengthen the treatment of human rights in an equitable and equal manner and reduce the gap between rich and poor, in order to enable developing countries to participate more equitably in the globalized new world order.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina also stated that the globalization process should contribute to the preservation of a rich and diverse cultural heritage for the well-being of mankind as a whole, since all world cultures share a joint cultural heritage.

Ireland

[Original: English]
[8 August 2007]

1. In its reply, the Government of Ireland recognized that globalization was not merely an economic process, but that it also had social, political, environmental, cultural and legal dimensions, which had an impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights.

2. Ireland noted that the impact of globalization on the full enjoyment of human rights was particularly relevant in the context of poverty alleviation, which was a major concern of the international community. Ireland emphasized its commitment to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and to reaching the target of contributing at least 0.7 per cent of gross national product

(GNP) each year on official development assistance to which it committed itself at the United Nations Millennium Review Summit in September 2005.

3. Ireland also stated that, with a view to meeting those commitments, its *White Paper on Irish Aid*, published in September 2006, mapped out the priority areas of work for the Government of Ireland's programme of assistance to developing countries (Irish Aid) into the future. According to Ireland, the White Paper noted that the fortunes of all peoples and States were increasingly bound together through the process of globalization and that Irish Aid programmes and projects should further the realization of human rights.

4. With a view to optimizing the economic aspects of globalization, Ireland's trade strategy, entitled *Trading for Economic and Social Development*, published in June 2005, outlined the National Agenda for Developing Countries and stated that the Government of Ireland was strongly committed to the multilateral and consensual nature of the World Trade Organization process being maintained and strengthened. It reported that the strategy also set out Ireland's commitment to the obligation to ensure that developing countries had access to adequate resources to most effectively develop and communicate their trade policies and the negotiating capacity that they required to participate effectively in trade negotiations. To that end, since 2000, Ireland had provided support to the major international organizations involved in trade-related technical assistance/capacity-building, including the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund. Finally, Ireland pointed out that the White Paper on Irish Aid included a commitment to increase funding for multilateral Aid for Trade initiatives.

Mauritius

[Original: English]
[25 June 2008]

1. The Government of Mauritius stated that globalization presented both challenges and opportunities to the promotion and safeguarding of human rights. It noted that with rapid progress in information technology and transport, national boundaries had become meaningless, thus giving any individual or group the possibility of evading the national shackles of seclusion, exclusion and discrimination and evolve globally with undenied rights.

2. Mauritius also noted that globalization unleashed the rights and opportunities to freedom of expression, access to information and services and the possibility of remedying any injustices and discrimination by alerting world opinion. Mauritius further stated that the same globalization might pose a serious threat to a society and thus jeopardize basic human rights if the people of that society were not equipped mentally, educationally, scientifically and technologically to face the new ways of life.

3. Moreover, the Government of Mauritius stated that the digital divide, technological deficit, illiteracy, poverty and paucity of infrastructure could not help but aggravate the marginalization of the already disadvantaged peoples in society.

Oman

[Original: Arabic]
[16 July 2007]

1. Oman stated that, since the 1970s, the Sultanate had managed to use the benefits of globalization to improve the lot of the Omani population as a result of the policies of His Royal Highness the Sultan, which struck the balance between technology and its benefits and authentic Omani traditions.

2. Oman also addressed the issue of globalization and poverty eradication and noted that there was no abject poverty in the Sultanate, due to social welfare policies. It stated that social issues were incorporated into all economic development plans. Moreover, Oman stated that civil society institutions were a fairly recent innovation in the Sultanate, especially institutions that dealt with poverty.

3. With regard to globalization and education, Oman stated that there had been a marked increase in educational attainment rates among males and females, and further noted that the course of Omani development was predicated upon equal opportunities for men and women in all spheres, women's empowerment and greater involvement of women in different areas so that they could contribute positively to overall development. Oman also recognized that the absence of gender equality in the Sultanate could not be attributed to discrimination in the Basic Law or in State legislation but rather to practices associated with certain traditions and customs that were out of touch with the spirit of the age. It further stated that the competent authorities needed to intensify efforts to improve awareness of women's rights and of all aspects of development among women and society at large.

4. Oman referred to the global development partnership and stressed the importance and necessity of active communication and cultural dialogue between States and other peoples. In that connection, it also provided information on the treaties that the Sultanate had signed and ratified.

5. Oman also addressed the issue of cooperation between the Sultanate and the private sector to benefit from new technology, especially information and communications, and provided detailed figures on the percentage of families owning a telephone line, mobile phone, or computer. It also referred to the impact of globalization on family cohesion and stated that, while changes were taking place in the Omani family because of globalization and its impact in the cultural, social and economic spheres, Omani families were still attached to customs, traditions and Islamic culture.

6. The reply from Oman referred in detail to the effect of globalization on the most socially disadvantaged groups. Oman noted that the scale and type of services offered to persons with disabilities in the Sultanate had developed considerably in the past three decades in the areas of social welfare, health and education. In addition, the Ministry of Social Development, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, offered numerous benefits to families receiving social security and persons with limited incomes with the aim of contributing directly to improving the living standards of these families.

7. The Sultanate provided particular care to orphans with an alternative welfare service in two settings, namely, (a) alternative care in families and (b) children's

welfare homes. Similarly, the reply from Oman described in depth the policies aimed at the care of older persons.

8. With regard to globalization and the Omani economy, Oman noted that investment in human resources was the key determining factor in the process of economic growth and the creation of jobs and was an influential factor in globalization. Oman further stated that the Government's economic policy focused on the challenges of diversifying sources of income and of privatization and attracting investment and foreign capital. According to Oman, although the Government pursued a policy of diversifying sources of income, the non-petroleum sector was still in its infancy and was neither sustainable nor stable. The Sultanate today was using the year 2020 as a benchmark for its policy of privatization and diversification of sources of income.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[26 June 2008]

1. The Russian Federation noted that globalization had both positive and negative aspects and highlighted one of its negative aspects, the growth of economic and social inequality and widening of the income gap between rich and poor. It also stated that the division of the world's countries by level of development had been increasing significantly and that this had resulted in a situation in which millions of people lived in extreme poverty. It also mentioned that this often led to the growth of intolerance and demands for a more equitable division of resources between the developed and developing countries.

2. The Russian Federation further stated that extreme poverty posed a serious threat to the implementation of all human rights and highlighted the efforts of the Russian Federation to reduce poverty, both within the country and abroad; those efforts included taking economic measures to increase financing for social development and sponsoring Human Rights Council resolution 7/27, entitled "Human rights and extreme poverty", respectively.

3. The Russian Federation also referred to the medium-term programme for the social and economic development of the Russian Federation, which contained a special section that set out measures to create conditions for increasing the population's income and reducing poverty, enhancing the effectiveness of the State's social assistance to the needy, and improve the pension system in the Russian Federation. It was also stated that there were plans to reduce poverty in the Russian Federation to a level no higher than 11 per cent by 2010.

4. Furthermore, the Russian Federation referred to the global food crisis as an example of the shortcomings of globalization. It provided information on the main reasons for such a crisis and recognized that the rise in food prices might have a negative impact on economic growth, security and the observance of human rights on a world scale. The Russian Federation further noted that it was symptomatic that the negative impact of the rise in food prices was stronger in developing countries than in developed countries and that it was therefore necessary to make globalization more manageable and equitable.

5. The Russian Federation also referred to the increased influence, within countries and in the national arena, of large non-State actors as a result of globalization, noting that there was a growing tendency for non-State actors to become independent participants in international relations and to assume the functions that formerly fell within the exclusive competence of Governments. In that connection, it also noted that transnational corporations and other large non-State actors as a rule did not bear liability before societies and States; hence, in such cases, one might talk about the erosion of State sovereignty and the simultaneous inability to ensure effective protection of the existing norms of international law.

6. The Russian Federation stressed the importance of providing more attention to the practice by States of transferring certain government functions to non-State actors in order to evade international legal responsibility for their actions. The Russian Federation submitted, as an example, the case of the delegation of the right to use military force to private militarized protection enterprises or to armed groups operating outside the law. The Russian Federation stated that the activities of non-State actors, particularly when they de facto assumed the functions of States, might result in large-scale violations of all human rights.

7. In that connection, the Russian Federation noted that the question of recognizing the responsibility of non-State actors for the human rights violations committed by them, as well as States' deliberate practice of transferring part of their powers to non-State actors with a view to evading responsibility under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, merited further study.

8. The Russian Federation further noted that, in promoting and protecting human rights, it was necessary to take account of the diversity of cultures and civilizations. Thus, it held that while the globalization of information had led to a sharp increase in opportunities for interaction among and interpenetration of diverse cultural and value systems, in order to ensure the dignity of every individual and equal opportunities for the free and harmonious development of the human personality, globalization must not lead to a levelling of the diversity of values and cultures. According to the Russian Federation, interaction among cultures and civilizations must not be replaced by the imposition of a value system characteristic of only one group of States. One way of achieving universal respect for human rights was to deepen understanding of the traditional values of humankind that formed the basis of the modern concept of human rights.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[10 June 2008]

1. The reply from Spain concentrated on the effect of globalization on the environment and noted that globalization had become one of the defining processes of the present day and had a major impact on the environment.

2. Spain stated that globalization was having a profound and multifaceted impact on societies throughout the world, resulting in both positive and negative changes in the way that people interacted with each other and with the natural world. It further

highlighted a number of positive effects on economic growth, food production, and conservation of biological diversity.

3. Moreover, in its report, Spain noted the negative effects of globalization. It referred to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Synthesis Report and concluded that globalization, especially with an economic focus, could lead to intense ecosystem degradation. The reply stated that ecosystem degradation combined with population growth and the emerging effects of climate change could have extremely high environmental — and, ultimately, social and economic — costs that could affect world economic growth by up to 20 per cent.

4. Spain also stated that globalization issues have repeatedly been the subject of debate in various environmental forums. In that connection, it recalled the United Nations Millennium Declaration contained in General Assembly resolution 55/2, the 2002 Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, which mentioned globalization on a number of occasions in relation to sustainable development. The reply from Spain paraphrased chapter V of the Johannesburg Plan of Action, which placed particular emphasis on the relationship between globalization and trade and the environment.

5. Spain also referred to other forums that discussed globalization issues: the ministerial-level consultations at the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) that dealt with the theme of globalization, ecosystem services and human well-being; and the European Union, under the presidency of Germany, which adopted a common position on that topic. Spain summarized the main points of the said common position, as follows:

(a) Globalization can have both positive and negative aspects. It is important that positive aspects are strengthened and negative aspects minimized, and that a clear link is established between globalization and the development of new environmental governance structures;

(b) This must be achieved by the appropriate use of such market mechanisms as medium- and long-term regulatory frameworks;

(c) Sustainability must be achieved by finding a proper balance between the economic, social and environmental components of development;

(d) There is no fundamental conflict between the economy and the environment. Appropriate tools to promote sustainable globalization already exist. This will require the use of technological development and innovation, with emphasis on greater energy efficiency and increased use of renewable sources of energy;

(e) The participation of all sectors, particularly the private sector, and the effective dissemination of information and technologies, should be encouraged. Existing initiatives in this direction are the United Nations Global Compact and the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;

(f) Partnerships and joint activities should be fostered at every level;

(g) Existing market mechanisms should be encouraged and new ones developed. For example, the contribution of ecosystem services is not sufficiently

appreciated nor is it integrated into decision-making. An understanding and adequate use of such tools will enable better use to be made of such principles as "polluter pays" or the internalization of environmental costs;

(h) Informed and participatory decision-making should be ensured and developed at every level. The use of such tools as participatory impact assessment and monitoring or early-warning systems should be encouraged;

(i) It is very important to ensure proper management of material flows and to understand life cycles. In this connection, the International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management should be developed;

(j) Support must be given to the developing countries, which are the most likely to be affected by the possible negative effects of globalization. Mechanisms for information or technology transfers and capacity-building should be fostered;

(k) In many cases, international organizations have not adapted adequately to the consequences of globalization. It is therefore essential to strengthen the existing structures of environmental governance, a task that might include the creation of a United Nations environmental organization provided with predictable, stable and adequate financial resources. There should also be closer coordination between the various environmental multilateral treaty bodies and closer cooperation between those bodies and the World Trade Organization.

6. Finally, Spain stated that the issues mentioned in its submission should be borne in mind in any future activities with regard to globalization and the environment deriving from General Assembly resolution 62/151, particularly in the context of paragraphs 7 (relating to environmentally sustainable globalization), 9, 12 and 13 (concerning follow-up activities).

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: Spanish]
[26 June 2008]

1. In its reply, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela recalled a statement contained in the preliminary report of the Secretary-General on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/55/342), which drew attention to the international legal framework setting out the measures to be taken for the promotion, protection and observance of all human rights, including the right to development in particular, in the context of globalization. The reply made reference to the following statement, contained in the report of the Secretary-General:

> "... within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that, 'Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized'. According to the norms and standards of international human rights law, such an international and social order is one that promotes the inherent dignity of the human person, respects the right of people to self-determination and seeks social progress through participatory development and by promoting equality and non-discrimination in a peaceful, interdependent and accountable world."

2. Venezuela noted that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

strengthened that international legal framework insofar as they established the primary responsibility of States for ensuring the effective realization of all human rights and their obligation to cooperate with each other in the economic field, on the basis of mutual benefit and with respect for the right to self-determination.

3. In that regard, the Bolivarian Republic stressed the importance of the role of the international community, through the United Nations, in dealing with the subject. It further referred to the changes produced by the globalization process mostly in science and technology, but also in the organization and division of labour, which had had a profound impact on all areas of human life, and not just on the economic sector. According to the reply, those changes had produced a new framework for relations within and among States and had deepened and redefined the old relations of dependence and domination.

4. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela further noted that terms such as "interdependence" and "integration in the international system" masked the prime characteristics of globalization, which were the establishment of a neo-colonialist process with new power blocs and bilateral and multilateral geopolitical strategies for the control of the world's resources. Venezuela also stated that such a process had been in some cases facilitated by the multilateral institutions and had resulted in misery and weakened States.

5. Moreover, the Member State submitted that human and natural disasters, and poverty and social exclusion were a result of a model of accumulation and development that had benefited the liberal elites of the North and South. The fact that human rights had been used as a tool for domination of the weaker States and peoples was also noted.

6. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stated that major Powers and allied groups of countries rejected the differences among peoples and democratic systems with the aim of imposing a single value system, a single model of democracy and single economic model. It further stated that such rejection was sometimes the result of a false and simplistic, but equally perverse, idea that the call for recognition of differences concealed a desire by the developing or "different" countries to shirk their human rights obligations. Venezuela stated that such epithets simply served as more tools — a product of hegemonic globalization that sought to achieve its ends through the use of stigmatization — to crush the will of sovereign States defending their political, economic, cultural and religious systems. Venezuela noted that the aim was for the developing States, facing the "blame and shame" policy pursued by the United States and its allies — both State and non-State — to subjugate their sovereignty to hegemonic schemes.

7. In its reply, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela drew attention to the negative consequences of globalization on the human rights of migrants. It stated that, as a consequence of globalization, new groups and even xenophobic policies, and new forms of discrimination had emerged and rapidly grown. This was also the reason why extreme rightist ideology had reached new heights, with an increasingly disconcerting treatment of migration as a crime. This was in flagrant violation of the human rights of migrants, and was occurring in spite of the fact that the doctrine of liberalization claimed to call for the free movement of people. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted that this disregarded the significant contributions that migrants had made to different cultures in all aspects of human life, and not just the economic aspects.

8. In that connection, the European Parliament had recently adopted a directive which was repressive and violated the human rights of migrants, at a time when the European Union was negotiating major trade agreements with various regions, in particular Latin America and the Caribbean. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted that that revealed the economic bias of globalization and its lack of any vision of human rights.

9. The recent alarm caused by the world food crisis could not have demonstrated more clearly how the neoliberal capitalist economic order, which was attempting to expand and consolidate under globalization, converted even food into a merchandise, allowing profit maximization to jeopardize the right to food of the majority of the world's population, and in particular the 850 million people who suffered from hunger.

10. Against that background, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela emphasized the need to achieve international cooperation on the basis of the right to solidarity, and the duty incumbent upon States to cooperate with one another in accordance with principles of international law. In that connection, Venezuela noted the creation of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), comprising Cuba, Dominica, Nicaragua and Venezuela, with the aim of establishing competitive advantages to compensate for the existing imbalance between the countries of the hemisphere, correcting the disparities that have traditionally been to the detriment of the weakest countries and creating consensus to foster endogenous development capable of eradicating poverty and substantially improving the quality of life of the peoples of the Americas.

11. Finally, the reply from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stated that its submission was not based on the premise that dialogue was impossible with those who maintain that globalization must be understood as an irreconcilable conceptual dichotomy, and appealed to the international community and the competent United Nations bodies to continue to objectively and transparently assess the impact of globalization on the enjoyment of all human rights, placing the right to development at the centre of that assessment.

III. Replies received from United Nations organizations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

[Original: English]
[11 July 2008]

1. In its reply, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs stated that the goal of the international community to create just and equitable societies could not be achieved without ensuring the human rights of the disadvantaged, such as persons with disabilities. It further noted that the implementation of the adopted United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, from the disability perspective of the universal human rights, could contribute to the multifaceted discourse on globalization and full enjoyment of human rights.

2. The Department made reference to the following three recurrent publications which related to the application of information technology by Governments and which, in the context of globalization, could have a potentially important impact on

the full enjoyment of human rights: the *United Nations E-Government Survey 2008* which assesses the e-government readiness of the Member States of the United Nations according to a quantitative composite index of e-readiness based on website assessment, telecommunication infrastructure, and human resource endowment; the *Compendium of Innovative E-Government Practices*, which is a compilation of recent case studies of innovative E-Government solutions, services and applications; and the *Compendium of ICT Applications on Electronic Government*, which is a collection of current ICT applications being used directly by or in partnership with Governments, governmental institutions and the private sector around the world to support administration and public service, while addressing governance challenges.

3. The Department highlighted its *World Economic and Social Survey*, which provided analyses of pressing long-term social and economic development issues, and noted that, according to the 2006 *Survey*, globalization had affected different countries or regions in different ways. It stated that in the industrialized world, the income level over the past five decades had grown steadily, while it has failed to do so in many developing countries, thereby causing a rise in already high world inequality. According to the 2006 *Survey*, while disparities in health and education among countries were not as wide as they used to be, the persistent disparities in health and education would remain sources of income inequality in the future.

4. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs made reference to the recent *World Economic and Social Survey 2008* on "Overcoming Economic Insecurity" which stated that a stable economic environment that was conducive to sustained development and the eradication of poverty was also key to building a more secure political environment. It added that, at the same time, political stability was necessary to encourage investment, including investment in human capital, spur economic growth and raise living conditions.

5. The Department referred to the annual report of the Secretary-General for the item of the Second Committee of the General Assembly dedicated to globalization and interdependence. In the 2007 report on impact of international commitments, policies and processes on the scope and the implementation of national development strategies, the Department made reference to key areas where global market forces, unleashed by economic liberalization, as well as international disciplines, rules, policies and processes, had an impact on the design and implementation of national development strategies.

6. In the 2006 report on the role of innovation, science and technology in pursuing development in the context of globalization, the Department stated that the multidimensional and key developmental role of science, technology and innovation was a major driving force of long-term economic growth and social well-being. It also emphasized that scientific and technological capacity required sound institutional-building as well as the nurturing of a complex network of partnerships among a wide variety of stakeholders spread across the globe.

7. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs also referred to its 2005 report on building institutions for achieving the development goals and integrating in the global economy, which addressed the institutional dimension of the challenges of integrating into the world economy and concluded that, whereas the role of markets was critical, it needed to be seen within the context of broader societal goals of social equity and environmental sustainability. According to the Department, the principal challenge facing developing countries was that of developing sound institutional foundations for the effective and efficient functioning of markets within the framework of their social and environmental objectives.